

3. Within the brief history that he gives note that he calls attention to the facts that 1) Israel's ancestors had served other gods (vs.2), 2) Israel had been an eye-witness to the wonders that God performed in Egypt (vs.7), 3) God had delivered them into the land of Canaan which they did not labor to build...
4. As a dramatic conclusion to this address, Joshua called upon all of Israel to serve the Lord (vs.14-15).
5. Israel, realizing the great things which God had done in their behalf (vs.17), vowed to serve God (vs.16).
6. Joshua informed them, that unless they kept themselves from all other gods, they could not serve God (vs.19ff).
7. Israel promised to serve the one true God (vs.21ff), and as a memorial, Joshua erected a stone of witness (vs.26ff).
8. The remaining portion of the chapter contains the account of the death of Joshua (vs.29ff). [NOTE: Vs. 31 states that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders which outlived Joshua.]
9. Note that the bones of Joseph were brought up to the land of Canaan. (cf. Gen.50:25)

JOSHUA: A REVIEW

The entire book of Joshua details the period of conquest (see page 4 of your notes). Joshua, the leader of the nation of Israel after Moses, is the central figure in the book in that he becomes God's spokesman for the nation of Israel. Joshua had commanded the nation of Israel when they engaged in their first battle against the Amalekites (Ex.17), he was one of the 12 spies sent into the land of Canaan (Num.13-14), and it was he (along with Caleb) who believed that Israel could take the land of Canaan even when 10 of the spies did not. As a result, of all the men of fighting age, only Joshua and Caleb saw the land of Canaan (i.e. actually entered into the land). The book of Joshua contains the detailed accounts of the conquest of the land of Canaan. It is a book which demonstrates that God will keep his word (II Cor.1:20; II Pet.3:9; etc.). In the opening verses of chapter one (see vs. 3) the Lord promised to be with the nation of Israel wherever they went (providing, of course, that they were obedient). Note that in chapter 21:43ff and in chapter 23:14ff that Joshua declares that GOD HAD KEPT ABSOLUTELY EVERY LAST ONE OF HIS PROMISES WHICH HE MADE TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. Furthermore, the book constitutes the fulfillment of the promise initially made to Abram in Gen.12:7, et al. Hundreds of years prior to the conquest of Canaan, God told Abram that he would bless his seed both physically and spiritually. Now with the entrance into the land of Canaan, that physical aspect of the covenant was beginning to be fulfilled. [NOTE: The borders of the land actually enlarged, and were the greatest during the reigns of King David and King Solomon.] The book of Joshua is no different from the preceding books in that it, too, tells us of the sins of the people of Israel. In Joshua 7 we learn of the sin of Achan, and in the final chapter we see that Joshua warned the people of the penalties for future sin. The book also contains the final division of the land of Canaan, the appointment of the cities of the Levites, and the establishment of the cities of refuge that have been discussed in the books of Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Israel finally reached a land that would be their own; a land that they did not establish, but one that was given to them by the strength of the Lord. The years of wandering in the wilderness ended, and so did the miraculous provision of manna (5:12), but they continued to be the people of the Lord as they entered into this new period of Jewish history. They had become a mighty nation in the sight of the world around them. They were to be strong physically, but more importantly they were to be strong spiritually...for out of Israel...the Messiah was to come.

JUDGES

With this book we see the entrance into the seventh period of Hebrew history, that of the period of the Judges. The book (and the period) receives its name from a series of judges who were appointed to rule/judge over the nation of Israel. These judges filled the interim period between the leaders of Joshua and Moses and the beginning of the kings.

The book covers a period of about 450 years and narrates the general history of the children of Israel during that period. Within the book we see the reigns of the different Judges beginning with Othniel. It should be remembered, that though Samuel is not mentioned within the book, that he, too, was a judge of Israel. His period of rule was the last of the judges, for it was he who anointed the first king over Israel. As with previous books, the book of Judges also portrays the sins of the nation of Israel.

CHAPTER ONE

1. After the death of Joshua, the nation of Israel was at a loss for a leader. Even though several judges reigned during this period, it must be noticed that these men (and one woman) were not judges over the entire nation of Israel, but were rather regional judges. It must also be mentioned that some of the reigns of the judges were contemporary with one another, and therefore an exact chronology is difficult.
2. The first 7 verses of chapter one detail the fighting of Judah against the Canaanites, and the capture and death of Adonibezek. [With regard to vs.7: Adonibezek had so treated some 70 kings in such cruel ways...that he, too, suffered the same indignities.]
3. The following section (vs.8-10) simply details more of the conquest of Judah.
4. Verses 11ff repeat the account found in Josh.15:15ff.
5. The final portion of this chapter contains further accounts of conquests by the tribes of Israel (vs.22-36). Note that in vs. 27ff mention is made several times of the fact that certain tribes of Israel were unable to drive out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. Though this seems to be in contradiction to Josh.3:10, the solution is found within the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

1. The first section of this chapter (vs.1-5) contains the reason why the Lord was not going to drive out any more of the inhabitants of the land of Canaan for Israel. Israel had not obeyed his voice (vs.2). The Lord, in his covenant, dictated his will to the children of Israel that they make no leagues with the inhabitants of the land and that they should throw down the altars of the land.
2. As a result of Israel's disobedience, God was going to let some of the nations remain within the land (vs.3).
3. Verses 6-10 repeat the account of Joshua's death which we previously noted in Josh.24. Notice vs 10 which specifically states that "there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." This further emphasizes the depths of Israel's apostasy. Though it was impossible for successive generations to be 'eyewitnesses' of all that the Lord did for Israel in their deliverance from Egypt and their conquest of the land of Canaan, they were to become familiar with these acts through the teachings of the previous generation. The reason that they did not know of these is because the previous generation/s neglected to teach Israel about them. Such neglect is common among Christians today; we sometimes exercise a zeal to learn, but then fail to distribute that education of God's word to our children. If members of the Lord's church did as Israel was to do, then the retention rate of our children would increase rapidly (Deut.6:6ff; Deut.11:18-21).
4. Verses 11-15 explain further about the apostate condition of Israel.
5. The last passage of this chapter (vs.16-23) contains information with regard to the establishment of the system of judges. Within this passage note: 1) the Lord always remained THE JUDGE (vs.18), 2) the judges were to deliver Israel (vs.16), 3) that God would not continue to drive out nations from Canaan, and 4) the remaining nations were left to prove Israel (vs.22).

CHAPTER THREE

1. The initial section of this chapter repeats the purpose of the remaining Canaanite nations (vs.1-7).

2. As before (2:11), it is now again mentioned that Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord (vs.7).
3. As a result of the evil of Israel, the Lord "sold" them (literally allowed them to become captives) to another nation (vs.8ff). When Israel cried unto the Lord (vs.9), he provided a judge (Othniel) to deliver them, (vs.9ff). This process will be repeated several times in the book of Judges.
4. Following this we note that Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord (v.12), and again Israel was dominated by another nation. This time Ehud was the deliverer of Israel. (vs12-30).
5. The last verse of this chapter states that Shamgar also delivered Israel (vs.31).

CHAPTER FOUR

1. This chapter begins by stating that Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord (vs.1). Again, they were "sold" into another king's hands (vs.2). Again, Israel cried unto the Lord (vs.3)...and again God put forth a judge to deliver them and to judge them (Deborah).
2. Verses 6-24 contain the account of Israel's overthrow of Jabin King of Canaan under the leadership of Deborah and the valiance of Barak.

CHAPTER FIVE

This entire chapter constitutes a song of Deborah and Barak subsequent to the victory of the preceding chapter. It expresses the confidence of Israel, the victory of Israel as brought about by the Lord, and the hopes of Israel that all of the Lord's enemies would be so defeated.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Again we see another account of "declension, discipline, and deliverance" (G.C. Morgan, Exposition..., p. 103) of the children of Israel. They sinned (vs.1), they cried unto the Lord (vs.6), and the Lord began to establish (act out) a plan that would provide for their deliverance (vs.11ff).
2. Verses 11-40 contain the account of how Gideon was chosen by God to be the one to deliver Israel out of their present distress. [Note vs.17-25 in which Gideon was convince of a heavenly presnece, vs.25-35 in which Gideon destroyed the altar of Baal, and vs.36-40 in which Gideon received signs from God.

CHAPTER SEVEN

This entire chapter details how it was that 1) Gideon's army was reduced to 300 men, 2) how Gideon and his men approached the Midianites, and 3) how they defeated the Midianites.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. The first part of this chapter (vs.1-28) tells how Gideon and his men captured and slew the kings of Midian.
2. Vs.29-32 depict the death of Gideon.
3. The last few verses (vs.33-35) once again show Israel's constant turning from God. (cf. vs.27)

CHAPTER NINE

1. Abimelech (one of the sons of Gideon) established himself as king, and in the process he slew all of his brothers with the exception of Jotham. (see vs.1-6)
2. Jotham rebukes Abimelech and the Shechemites for allowing him (i.e. Abimelech) to do what he has. (see vs.7-21, especially vs.19-20 where Jotham makes a prophetic utterance with regard to the destiny of Abimelech and Shechem.)
3. Verses 22-49 contain an account of the conspiracy of Gaal against Abimelech and his (Gaal's) exile from Shechem as well as the demise of those in the tower of Shechem.
4. The final portion of this chapter depicts the death of Abimelech. Note that these things occurred as Jotham said they would (vs.56-57).

in in believe means plural

CHAPTER TEN

1. The first five verses teach us that two more Judges reigned over parts of Israel, Tola and Jair.
2. Verses 6-18 detail once again the sins of Israel. 1) They did evil in the sight of the Lord, 2) they served other gods, 3) they cried into the Lord, 4) they acknowledged their sin, 5) God reminded them of their previous deliverances and told them to go to the gods which they worshipped before, 6) Israel again acknowledged their sin, and 7) they put away their strange gods.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. The first part of this chapter (vs.1-10) contain the background of Jephthah and the account of his selection as the leader of Israel against the Ammonites.
2. The following section of the chapter (vs.11-28) contains the account of the message which he sent unto the king of Ammon. Note that vs.15-22 traces the history of the relation-ship between Israel and Ammon with regard to the land under question. Note that Jephthah gives proper credit to the Lord for being the one who dis-possessed the former inhabitants of the land. Note also vs. 28 in which Jephthah told the king of Ammon that it would be sinful for him (i.e. the king of Ammon) to war against Israel.
3. The following verses have presented a great difficulty to Biblical scholars. The greatest question of course being: Did Jephthah offer his daughter as he vowed, or was he somehow or another freed from his hasty vow? In consulting the following commentaries (Clark, Barnes, DeHoff, Zerr, Morgan, Wycliffe, Ellicott) I have observed that there is a 50-50 split as to the meaning of the passage. The questions needing answers are: 1) Was Jephthah intending to offer a human sacrifice, or just any sacrifice? 2) Does the literal Hebrew use the conjunction "and" or does it use "or"? 3) Did Jephthah's daughter realize the true meaning of the vow? 4) Was his daughter committed to perpetual virginity in fulfilment of the vow, or was she sacrificed? 5) Would such a sacrifice have been acceptable to God if it did indeed take place? Of all of the questions, only the last can be answered with absolute certainty. No, God would not have accepted such a sacrifice. Human sacrifices were an abomination in the sight of God, and such provided one of the reasons why Israel was to drive out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. In this light, consider another question. Would Jephthah, if he did intend to offer his daughter as a sacrifice, have been wrong if he did not carry out such sacrifice? Remember, he vowed to do so and once a vow was made it was obligatory to keep the vow (cf. Deut.23:21ff; Numb.30).
Verses 32ff detail the eventual victory of Jephthah over the Ammonites.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The first 6 verses contain an account of the dispute between Ephraim and Jephthah. Verse 7 records the death of Jephthah.
Verses 8-15 tell us of the reigns of Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon as judges over the land of Israel.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

This entire chapter provides us with background information concerning the birth of Samson, and a general statement with regard to his childhood days (vs.24-25).

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. The first part of this chapter provides us with an account of Samson's interest in a woman of Timnath. (vs.1,7)
2. Though Samson's parents did not approve of this union, from vs.4 we are told that this was somehow or another "of the Lord".
3. Prior to marrying the woman, a feast was prepared during which Samson proposed a riddle for the men (30 of them) present. (vs.8ff.)
4. In an effort to learn of the solution to the riddle, the men threatened Samson's wife (vs.15ff).

5. In order to save her house and her father's she endeavored to learn of the answer to the riddle (vs.16-18).
6. When Samson realized that the men had learned the answer from his wife (vs.18) he agreed to fulfill his end of the agreement. He defeated 30 men from Ashkelon (Philistines) and presented their garments to the men from the feast.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. In the opening verses of this chapter we learn that Samson was denied the right to see his wife. (vs.1-2)
2. To retaliate against the Philistines, Samson devised a method to burn down their crops (vs.3ff).
3. As a result, the Philistines slew his wife and her father (vs.6).
4. In vs. 10ff we notice that the men of Judah expressed concern over the actions of Samson, and sought to deliver him to the Philistines that they might be alleviated of any harm (vs.10-13).
3. In-stead of being delivered to the Philistines, Samson broke his bonds and slew 1000 Philistines (vs.14ff).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. Though Samson was a great man, he sinned (vs.1ff).
2. Beginning in vs. 4 of this chapter we see the story of the romance between Samson and Delilah.
3. Evidently the lure of money (vs.5) proved too great for Delilah, and we therefore see her trying repeatedly to learn the source of Samson's strength. (vs.6ff)
4. When she finally learns the source of his strength, she sent and told the Philistines (vs.18) and Samson became their captive.
5. The last section of this chapter details the account of the death of Samson and his destruction of the Philistines while they sought to make sport of him. (vs.23ff)

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

1. Within this chapter we note the account of Micah and his images. Micah stole money from his mother, later returned it, and then received some of it back, with which he made a "house of gods" (vs.5). This simply showed the degenerate condition that was common place during these times.
2. As evidence of the degeneration, note vs. 6: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."
3. The spiritual state of Micah is further shown in his hiring of a Levite to serve as his personal priest. The Levite was not set forth for the children of Israel to serve the Lord in this fashion. To compromise his duties by working simply in order to receive wages, food, and clothing was against the will of the Lord. Some have mistakenly assumed that Micah was an extremely religious man, and therefore his actions were accepted in the sight of Jehovah. Note: 1) he made images, 2) he stole money from his own mother, and 3) he sought to establish some sort of private worship to God in violation of the plain commands of God to worship in another way. How, then, could this man be right in his actions?
4. Micah's statement with regard to the Lord in vs. 13 is indeed true; if one does well (spiritually) in the sight of God, he will also receive physical prosperity. But one should not seek to please the Lord solely for the purpose of receiving physical blessing...this act is wrong. Micah's actions were wrong in the sight of God, and he therefore was incorrect to assume that the Lord would bless him.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

1. Note again that there was no king in Israel. (vs.1) This fact lead Israel to engage in a host of error as we have begun to see.
2. The inheritance of the Danites was previously described in Joshua 19:40ff. They had not yet received the land because they did not drive out the Philistines at this time.
3. As the people of Dan sent out men to search the land, they came unto the house of Micah.

4. Upon their return, the children of Dan again passed by the house of Micah and took his images and his priest (vs.14ff). When others came after the Danites, they retreated when threatened. Thus the Danites went forth and fought against the city of Laish (later called Dan) and won. After their victory they established a place of worship of their own. Notice that in Joshua 18:1 the house of God (i.e. the tabernacle) was presently at Shiloh. It was their that the children of Israel were to worship God. The Danites, in failing to do so, were guilty of idolatry.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

1. As with the last chapter, here again we note that it is pointed out that there was no king in Israel. This did not excuse those who acted wrongly during this period of time, it simply explains why their actions were what they were. (vs.1)
2. This chapter begins the story of what turns out to be an exceedingly horrible tragedy. A Levite concubine left him and went to the house of her father. The Levite went after her, and after several days began the journey homeward. Passing by the city of Jebus (later Jerusalem), the man came unto the city of Gibeah, where he intended to spend the night. Initially, he was not invited to spend the night with anyone. Later, an old man returning from the field saw the Levite and invited him and his company to spend the night with him. The rest of the story parallels the account of the angels who visited the household of Lot in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen.19). Men of the city came to the house seeking to have sinful relations with the Levite. In their wickedness, the men of the household offered the women to the men of the city. They took the concubine and abused her to the extent that she died as she reached the door of the house the next morning.
3. In condemnation of the event, the Levite returned home, and cut the woman into pieces and sent them to the various parts of Israel. This act was most likely done in order to call attention to the decadence of the tribe of Benjamin. It is most worthy to note, that regardless of the levels to which mankind may plunge in pursuit of pleasure and vice, there always remains something that will spark his conscious to realize that real objective wrong exists. This Levite acted foolishly in allowing this woman to be taken, but when he realized what the men of that city had done...even he was repulsed. Though his division and distribution of the woman's body is quite a macabre tale, it did accomplish its intended purpose. [Note that vs. 30 indicates that no such deed occurred since the exodus from Egypt. This further depicts the sinfulness of Israel during the period of the Judges.]

CHAPTER TWENTY

1. When the rest of Israel became aware of the sin of these people (ch.19), they came to Gibeah seeking the men guilty of the crime (vs.13). When the children of Benjamin refused to hearken to their demands...a war started.
2. As a result of the war, many thousands of men were lost on both sides. Benjamin lost so many men, that the rest of Israel feared that the entire tribe might disappear (cf. ch.21).

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

1. The initial part of this chapter (vs.1-7) depicts the concern of the rest of Israel for the tribe of Benjamin.
2. In order to keep the tribe of Benjamin from disappearing, the rest of the tribes proposed that the virgins from the camp of Jabeshgilead (that tribe which refused to come to the assembly..vs.8) be given to the tribe of Benjamin for their wives. When that proved insufficient, the daughters of Shiloh were procured for their wives.
3. The chapter and the book closes with the theme of Judges, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (vs.25)

JUDGES: A REVIEW!

The book of Judges, which occupies the seventh period of Hebrew history (page 4), provides us with an account of these actions of Israel between the conquest of the land of

the land of Canaan and the appointment of the first king over Israel. During this time a succession of divinely appointed judges ruled and judged the land of Canaan. The provision of the judges depicts the providence of the Lord. He had always provided leadership for the nation of Israel previous to this, and he continued to do so. Though the leadership of the judges was not exactly the same as the single rule which existed under Moses and Joshua, there was still leadership. Evidently, the people were not satisfied. Within the book we see several references to the fact that because there existed no king, the children of Israel did that which was right in their own eyes (ch.17:6;21:25). The book of Judges also depicts specific acts which show that this generalization is true: 1) note the number of times that Israel returned to a state of sinfulness when a judge died (cf. 2:17,19ff;3:12;4:1;et al.); 2) note the assumption of the role of king by Abimelech (ch.9); 3) note the foolish vow of Jephthah (ch.11); 4) note the sins of Samson, Micah, the Danites, the Levite, and the Benjamites, and note also the numerous times false gods are mentioned within the book. The children of Israel eventually fell into those sins which both Moses and Joshua warned them of prior to their deaths. It is important to notice the fact that doing things right in our own eyes will not save us, but that doing things right in God's sight will (cf. Deut 12:8;13:18 ("do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord thy God"); Is.4:21). **EVEN THOUGH THERE EXISTED DIVINELY APPOINTED JUDGES, WE MUST REALIZE THAT THE ULTIMATE JUDGEMENT BELONGS TO GOD (II COR.5:10FF).**

RUTH

Due to the brevity of the book of Ruth, it will suffice us to examine the book in one fell swoop; rather than introducing the book, proceeding with a chapter analysis; and then reviewing the book.

It might seem strange that such a simplistic almost devotional book appears after the book of Judges in our Bibles, but the placing of it shows us something of great importance. In the book of Judges we noticed that the children of Israel were almost continually involved in some sinful endeavor. The fact that Moses stated in Deut. 9:24 (Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you.) seems to pervade the book of Judges, but with the book of Ruth we see the opposite of that. Within this book, we see not only a love story that develops between Ruth and Boaz, but also the greatness of faith of Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz. Their faith and their manifestations of that faith provide a welcome contrast to the manifestations of sin in the nation of Israel as depicted in the book of Judges. The important thing to notice is that the story of Ruth is contemporary with the accounts depicted in Judges (cf. ch.4). Though we sometimes read of situations that seem absolutely and totally in opposition to the will of God, we sometimes forget that there always remain a few who are faithful. This concept (i.e. the concept of the remnant) is shown here and elsewhere in the pages of the word of God.

Ruth, a Moabite woman, left her land and came to the land of Israel because of her love and devotion for Naomi, her mother-in-law. Because she was not an Israelite, it was possible that difficulties may have arose, but Ruth accepted God (1:16) and God was with her. She came to labor in the fields of Boaz, who himself seems to be the epitome of a faithful man (cf. 2:4,11ff; et al.). He allowed Ruth to continue to work in his fields and saw to it that no one harmed her. As the story develops we learn that Ruth and Boaz are related, but that another has the right to her before he does. Boaz goes to the man...and eventually he wins the right to her in marriage, and they do marry.

Throughout all of this the faith of Naomi is apparent. It must have been at her hand that Ruth learned her own faith. It was at the encouragement of Naomi that Ruth took interest in Boaz. In addition to that, the suffering which Naomi went through was tremendous (she lost her husband and two sons in Moab)...yet she maintained a solid faith in God.

Yet, through all of this...a greater lesson is learned. In the midst of the sin of Israel that we learn of in the book of Judges, there existed a few righteous (as we see in the book of Ruth), and not just any righteous, but the righteous who were the ancestors of the future kingdom of David, and the ancestors of the Christ who was to